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ABSTRACT

The State Inservice Education Opportunities Act (Kansas) allows certified staff to be recertified using a combination of methods in addition to or besides university credit hours. Participating local districts determine the combination allowed and the limits to be set on each method. Currently, 106 districts have local inservice plans operating. This paper summarizes guidelines for preparing an inservice education plan. To write a local plan, a district must complete nine steps: (1) notify the State Department of Education of intent to develop a plan, (2) organize the professional development council, (3) develop a needs assessment, (4) establish goals, (5) determine objectives, (6) identify inservice education activities to accomplish objectives, (7) submit the plan for approval, and (8) maintain the plan. To make the plan work, the local council must have strong administrative and financial support, provide staff to administer the program, appoint a permanent director, computerize records, start small, develop open commmunications, and maintain quality control and flexibility. The council must also ensure that workshops and seminars presented are of high quality, meet staff needs, and are held in comfortable surroundings. (Author/MLH)

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# CREATING A CLIMATE FOR SUCCESS:
# Developing a District Inservice Plan
# And Making It Work

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## ABSTRACT

The State Inservice Education Opportunities Act provides the option for certificated personnel in Kansas to recertify using a combination of methods in addition to or besides university credit hours. Participating local districts determine the combination allowed and the limits to be set on each method. Currently, 106 districts in Kansas have local inservice education plans operating.

U.S.D. #457 in Garden City, Kansas, was the first district in the state to have an approved plan. Since 1983, this plan has grown and changed to accommodate the needs of a diversified student and staff clientele.

To write a local plan, a district must complete nine steps. They must notify the State Department of Education of intent to write a plan, organize a local council, develop a needs assessment, establish goals, determine objectives, identify inservice activities designed to accomplish these objectives, design a process for evaluation, submit the plan to the local BOE for approval and subsequently to the State Department of Education, and finally, maintain the plan.

To make the program work, the local council must begin with strong administrative and financial commitment, provide the staff to administer the program, appoint a permanent director, computerize records, start small, communicate often and consistently to the staff, maintain quality control, and be flexible.

Since much of the program will depend upon the strength of local inservices presented, the local council must take steps to ensure that the workshops and seminars presented are of high quality, meet the needs of the staff, and are held in comfortable surroundings.

Though the task of establishing a local inservice program and making it work is formidable, the end result is well worth the work required. Such an option made available to teachers and administrators gives them control over their professional lives, makes them accountable for their own professional growth, and is more likely to meet the individual needs of a local district than coursework selected for extension offerings by a university located far away.

Historically, recertification requirements have required teachers and other certificated school personnel to earn a specified number of graduate hours in order to be recertified. This, of course, has given colleges and universities a captive group of school clientele working toward recertification or advanced degrees.

In the past few years, inservice education has become a major method of recertifying teachers in the United States. According to a study by Hanes & Rowles, by 1986 as many as 40 states will require some form of inservice for recertification of teachers.

In Kansas, the State Inservice Education Opportunities Act provides, in participating local districts, a process whereby certified personnel can engage in inservice activities for renewal of certification. Since the first district was approved by the State Department of Education in 1983, over 100 school districts now have local inservice education programs allowing for recertification of district personnel through inservice activities. Additionally, many more are currently developing inservice education programs for this purpose.

Guidelines for preparing a local inservice education plan which would meet the requirements of State Board of Inservice Education regulations are available from the Certification, Teacher Education, and Accreditation Section of the Department of Education. These guidelines are designed to assist local districts in the development of inservice education plans. Included in the guidelines are explanations of the steps a district will follow in developing an inservice plan to submit to the State Board of Education for approval. Those steps are listed below:

1. Notify the State Department of Education that the district will develop and submit a five-year inservice education plan.

2. Organize the professional development council, a representative group of local certified personnel. The council advises the local board of education in matters concerning the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the inservice education plan. This includes the validation of individual development plans which outline activities for the renewal of certification.

3. Develop a needs identification process to determine the inservice needs of the district, school buildings, and individuals participating in the local plan.

4. Establish the goals of the local inservice education plan. These goals guide the development of the remainder of the inservice education plan.

5. Determine the objectives of the education plan. These are based on the prioritized needs and contribute to the achievement of the established goals. Program objectives are identified for five years and the current year.

6. Identify inservice education activities designed to accomplish the desired objectives, and develop the activity plan.

7. Design the evaluation of the inservice education program. The evaluative criteria should address the effectiveness of district inservice activities, the implementation and operation of the local plan, and the overall inservice program.

8. Submit the plan for approval to the local board and then to the State Department of Education for review. The Department will forward the plan to the State Board of Education for approval, approval subject to modifications, or disapproval.

9. Maintain the inservice education plan. Maintenance functions include the recordkeeping operations for the individual development plans submitted for renewal of certification, annual updates of the inservice education plan, and amendments to that plan.

## STATE DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING THE LOCAL INSERVICE EDUCATION PLAN

### STEP 1. NOTIFYING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The chief administrative officer of the local district will notify the Certification, Teacher Education and Accreditation Section of the State Department of Education in writing that the local professional development council will develop and submit for approval a five year plan for inservice education. The Certification, Teacher Education, and Accreditation Section will acknowledge in writing the receipt of the notification.

### STEP 2. ESTABLISHING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

**Definition:** The professional development council is a representative group of local district certified personnel which advises the local board of education in matters concerning the planning, development, implementation, and operation of the inservice education plan.

**Composition:** The members of the professional development council shall be representative of the certified personnel employed by the local district.

The members of the professional development council shall include at least as many teachers as administrators, and the representatives from these two groups should be selected by the group they represent. The total number of members on the professional development council is left to the discretion of the local district. The process for selecting the members of the professional development council is to be decided by the group selecting the representatives.

**Term of Office:** The local inservice education plan should identify a process which provides for rotation of the professional development council membership in such a way that continuity is maintained.

**Functions:** The major functions of the professional development council include the following:

1. Develop a system to identify the inservice education needs of the district and to translate the needs into goals and objectives for the inservice program.

2. Evaluate individual development plans and recommend their approval or disapproval to the local board of education. This task may be delegated to one or more subcommittees established by the council.

3. Develop and recommend to the local board of education a five-year inservice plan to be submitted to the State Department of Education.

4. Recommend to the local board of education which individual development plans should be validated.

**Operational Procedures:** The local inservice education plan will include written policies which describe the procedure established for the operation of the professional development council. A policy statement or statements should be developed on each of the following:

1. Administrative procedures

    a. Composition of the council
    b. Method to be used in rotating council membership in such a way that the council will maintain continuity and remain representative of the certified staff
    c. Method of filling a vacancy on the council
    d. Identification of the offices
    e. Term of each office
    f. Duties attached to each office
    g. Frequency with which the council will meet
    h. Criteria to be used in reviewing professional development plans and recommending their approval or disapproval
    i. Procedure for receiving individual development plans
    j. Means to be used for informing certified personnel and the local board of education of the decisions and activities of the council

2. Methods to be used in making decisions

    a. Majority vote
    b. Consensus Agreement

3. Developing agenda

    a. Decide how items would be proposed for council agenda;
    b. Decide whether a time limit will be attached to each agendum item;
    c. Decide whether agenda will be prepared in advance of the

council meetings;
d. Determine to whom agenda would be distributed.

4. Taking and maintaining records of meetings

a. Designate who is responsible for keeping the records;
b. Establish the form in which the records will be recorded;
c. Decide where the records will be kept;
d. Determine how and to whom copies of the records will be disseminated.

5. Approving Inservice activities

a. List criteria to be used by the professional development council to approve inservice activities;
b. Identify the kinds of activities acceptable as inservice education within the district plan.

6. Accepting and approving individual development plans

a. Devise guidelines outlining the process for accepting individual development plans;
b. Establish criteria for approving or disapproving individual development plans;
c. Outline the process an individual would follow in the event his/her individual development plan was not approved by the professional development council.

7. Validation of the individual development plans

The council develops a procedure recommending to the local board of education that individual development plans have met the criteria for validation.

## STEP 3. ESTABLISH A NEEDS IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

**Definition:** A need is defined as the discrepancy between actual outcomes and desirable outcomes or the difference between what is and what should be. The methods used to determine the discrepancies between the actual and desirable outcomes comprise the needs identification process.

A needs identification process is established and coordinated by the professional development council to supply information about the inservice needs of the district, school building, and individual. This information can then be used to establish priorities for inservice program planning and development.

**Needs Identification Methods:** There are a number of methods for determining inservice needs for the district, school, and individual. Needs identification procedures do not need to be elaborate and complicated, but they must be thorough and well-planned.

Some methods that may be used to collect information about needs include the following:

1. Personal interviews
2. Group discussions
   a. brainstorming
   b. consensus building
3. Review of existing information
4. Surveys/Questionnaires

**Prioritizing Results:** After needs have been initially identified by means of one or several of the above listed methods, they can then be prioritized.

**STEP 4. ESTABLISH THE GOALS OF THE INSERVICE EDUCATION PLAN**

**Definition:** Goals are broad, general statements which establish the intent of the inservice education program and which are suggested by the identification of needs. They are a restatement of the needs.

Because the goal statements will guide the development of the remainder of the inservice education plan, it is essential that the goals are clear and that they provide action-oriented direction. Write the goal in words describing the outcome, not the process.

**STEP 5. DETERMINE THE INSERVICE EDUCATION PLAN OBJECTIVES**

**Definition:** Inservice education program objectives are measurable outcome statements which would be achieved over specific periods of time ranging from one to five years.

Objectives are necessary for translating needs into program. The objectives are written so that they contribute to the achievement of the established goals, and the objectives should be addressed by the development of program activities. Objectives may be either short- or long-term in scope and address those areas identified as high priority in the needs identification process.

Objectives are stated in measurable terms that will describe what a participant will accomplish once the objective is achieved. Ideally, objectives are written so that they meet the following criteria:

1. Are precise and measurable;
2. Describe the intended behavior or performance;
3. Specify who is to show the behavior or performance;
4. Specify the conditions under which the behavior or performance will occur;
5. Specify the criteria to indicate how well the behavior or performance has been accomplished.

**STEP 6. IDENTIFY INSERVICE EDUCATION PLAN ACTIVITIES**

**Definition:** The activities are the processes and experiences

designed to accomplish the desired objectives.

Activities which are based on valid learning theory and are appropriate for inservice education should be identified. In planning activities, consideration is given to the characteristics of the participants, the resources required for the activities, and the likelihood of success.

Activity plans should be developed for district inservice education activities. Those activities reported in the local inservice education plan include all inservice activities incorporated in the district plan except those involving only one individual. Inservice activities which will be implemented during later years of the local plan may be described in general terms. Those inservice activities planned for the next school year are described in specific terms.

**Activity Plans:** Activity plans include the following items:

1. The objective or objectives the activity is designed to attain (long-range activities and next year's activities);
2. A description of the activity (long-range activities and next year's activities);
3. The group or groups to be involved in the activity (long-range activities and next year's activities);
4. The anticipated number of inservice points to be generated by the activity (next year's activities);
5. A timeline indicating when the activity should start and end;
6. The person or persons responsible for coordinating the activity;
7. The resources necessary for effective completion of the activity;
8. The method by which the effectiveness of the activity will be assessed.

## STEP 7. DEVELOP CRITERIA BY WHICH THE INSERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM WILL BE EVALUATED

**Definition:** Evaluative criteria are those standards by which the inservice education program will be assessed in terms of its impact on the teaching-learning process.

There are three elements involved in the development of procedures and instruments for evaluating the inservice education program. The elements are evaluation of the inservice education program activities, the evaluation of the total inservice education program,

and the evaluation of the implementation and operation of the inservice education plan.

**Evaluation of inservice activities:** Each inservice activity plan includes a proposed method for evaluation of the activity. A compilation and analysis of the results of those evaluations would provide information regarding the effectiveness of the inservice activities, the degree to which the activities met the objectives, the relevance of the activities to the needs of the participants, and the effect of the activity on classroom performance.

**Evaluation of the inservice education program:** The evaluation of the total inservice plan involves assessing the impact of the plan on the inservice goals of the district and the school and on the professional growth of certified personnel. Measures need to be designed which can be used to determine the outcomes of the inservice plan, whether or not the inservice education program accomplished what was intended and whether or not the goals were met and the objectives attained.

## STEP 8. DEVELOP INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Individual development plans are necessary for participating certified personnel. The purposes of the individual development plan are to establish continuity and specificity in the job related training of an individual; to enrich knowledge, skill, and attitudes; to expand the options for renewal of certification; to improve job performance; and to increase satisfaction for educators.

Inservice credit to be used for renewal of certification must have been completed within the scope of an individual development plan and within an approved local inservice education plan.

**Inservice education as a basis for renewal of certification:** For renewal of certification, 160 inservice education points must be accumulated during the five-year period preceding renewal of certification. If an individual's highest degree is a baccalaureate degree, at least one-half of the inservice education points must be college/university credit. If an individual holds a master's degree or other advanced degree, the 160 inservice education points may be totally inservice education credit, totally college/university credit, or any combination of the two.

Inservice credit shall be equated as follows:

1. Inservice education point = 1 clock hour of approved inservice education activity

2. Inservice education points = 1 semester hour of 20 college/university credit

**Development of individual plans:** Each participating certified employee of a district, in cooperation with a designated supervisor, devises an individual development plan.

The plan includes sequential instruction and enabling experiences designed to improve the performance of the individual in an area of his/her certification or in an area leading to a new endorsement and in which the individual is enrolled in an approved program.

Individual development plans are written for a period of one to five years with provision for annual review and revision. They reflect the inservice needs of the school and district as well as the professional growth needs of the individual.

**Approval process for the individual plan:** The approval process for the individual development plan includes the following steps:

Step 1. The certified employee signs the plan.

Step 2. The designated supervisor signs the plan if he/she agrees with the plan

Step 3. The professional development council reviews the individual development plan and recommends to the local board of education that the plan be either approved or disapproved.

Step 4. The local board of education either approves or disapproves the individual development plan.

The local district must keep a copy of all approved individual development plans of participating certified personnel. The individual development plan should be reviewed and revised annually.

## STEP 9. SUBMIT THE INSERVICE EDUCATION PLAN TO THE KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Definition:** A local inservice education plan is a description of the process necessary for developing, implementing, and maintaining an inservice education program.

After the professional development council approves the local inservice education plan, the council forwards the plan to the local board of education for approval. When this process is complete, as indicated by the signature of the president of the board, the plan is submitted to the Certification, Teacher Education, and Accreditation Section of the Kansas State Department of Education.

Upon receipt of the local inservice education plan, Certification, Teacher Education, and Accreditation Section staff review the plan and recommend to the State Board of Education that the plan be approved, approved subject to modification, or disapproved.

The State Board will then take action on the local plan, and the local district will be notified in writing of the decision.

## STEP 10. MAINTAIN THE INSERVICE EDUCATION PLAN

**Definition:** Maintenance of the local inservice education plan involves those functions necessary for keeping the plan current and reflective of changes within the scope of the plan.

Maintenance functions include recordkeeping operation, annual updates of the plan, and amending a local inservice education plan.

1. RECORDKEEPING: Appropriate records regarding the inservice education plan will be maintained by the local district. It is the responsibility of the education agency to keep a copy of the individual development plan of each participating certified employee.

The local district must keep a transcript for each participating certified employee which describes the activities in which the individual participated and the number of inservice points earned. When a participating employee applies for renewal of certification, the employee requests that the local district file the professional development transcript with the State Department of Education.

2. ANNUAL UPDATE: Submit an annual update to the State Department of Education. This update is completed for each of the remaining years the local inservice education plan is in effect.

This update includes the following information:

a. A copy of the evaluation(s) of the local inservice education plan and program.

b. A statement of priorities for the following school year.

c. An update of proposed activities for following school year.

3. AMENDING A LOCAL PLAN: An amendment to the local inservice education plan may be submitted to the State Department of Education at any time.

A local district inservice education plan may be amended at any time. An amendment is considered to be a major change or addition to the plan, and the amendment should be approved prior to implementing the change. The amendment is approved by the local board of education prior to its submittal to the State Department of Education.

**MAKING THE INSERVICE EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK**

You have just experienced the easy part of the development of a local inservice education program. While the details of the program may seem complicated, they really are not. Local districts have considerable latitude to develop an inservice program which will best fit their district's needs. The difficult part of the program is making it work. While more and more

districts in the State of Kansas are developing professional development/inservice education programs, many are experiencing problems or growing pains. Like other new things, however, familiarity gradually breeds acceptance.

In 1983 U.S.D. #457 Garden City was the first school district to take advantage of the state inservice education program. The years of experience with this program lead us to give the following points of advice to those of you who are considering developing a program or have a program which is having problems:

1. Have strong administrative and Board of Education support for the staff development concept before you begin.

2. Hand select the teachers and administrators to develop the district plan. They too, must have a strong commitment to the staff development concept.

3. Provide necessary staff to administer the program. The Garden City program began without a secretary and now has employed a full-time person to handle the paperwork.

4. Make coordination of the program consistent. Coordination of a well-run staff development program is a must. We have had one chairman throughout the four years of the program evolution. This continuity of leadership has worked well for our district.

5. Computerize the paperwork. When you start a staff development program you will soon realize that the paperwork can be overwhelming and can easily get out of control. The answer for our district has been to computerize all paperwork.

6. Start small. The quality of a circle is in its roundness, not its bigness. It is better to find out what works when you have a small number of staff involved than with a larger group.

7. Communicate to all staff members the advantages of the program and how it works, not once but again and again, as many times as is necessary. Remember, you are selling a new, unknown product to your staff.

8. Insist upon high quality goals, objectives, and evaluations from all participants. After all, these people are being recertified and possibly moving on the salary schedule based on this work. Expect their best efforts.

9. Presently there are many staff development programs established in Kansas. Take the time to visit several programs that are working well; then design your own. Tailor the program to fit your district.

10. Be flexible. Be ready to change the parts of the program that are not working in your district. It is better to change or repair than to lose control of an excellent concept of professional staff development.

A final point to remember is that professional development plans ultimately succeed or fail on the strength of local inservices which are presented. Assuming that a plan is past the start-up phase and is running reasonably smoothly, an eventual obstacle could be the quality of local inservices themselves.

Quality can be achieved by requiring vitas from presenters, monitoring evaluations carefully, sending copies of evaluations to presenters, and providing variety in the programs given each year. On a more mundane but equally important level, success can also be ensured by seeing to the physical arrangements. Seating should be comfortable, lighting adequate, and refreshments available. Temperature should be capable of being regulated. One of the least successful inservices ever presented in Garden City was a timely topic (adolescent suicide), and the presenter was excellent. Comments on evaluations, however, had to do only with the deplorable conditions in a school gymnasium on a hot May afternoon. When presenting local inservices, climate in the literal sense matters.

Finally, the inservice program itself needs to provide plenty of opportunity for participation. Active, involved learners should be the goal not only of teachers but also of presenters of inservice programs. A typical sixty-minute program which provides involvement @ various levels consists of an ice-breaker, explanation, small group discussion, and finally a large group activity to achieve synthesis and closure. However the time is configured, success is synonymous with participant involvement.

Though the task of making a local inservice plan work may seem formidable, it is certainly not impossible. If commitment at all levels is present, your district or agency can begin participating in an exciting plan for your staff's professional growth and development.

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